



# General Assembly

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## Fifty-sixth session

### **Request for the inclusion of a supplementary item in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session**

### **Need to examine the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan, to ensure that the fundamental right of its twenty-three million people to participate in the work and activities of the United Nations is fully respected**

### **Letter dated 8 August 2001 from the representatives of Belize, Burkina Faso, Chad, Dominica, El Salvador, the Gambia, Nicaragua, Palau, Senegal and Tuvalu to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

Upon the instructions of our respective Governments, we have the honour to request, pursuant to rule 14 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, the inclusion in the agenda of the fifty-sixth session of a supplementary item entitled "Need to examine the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan, to ensure that the fundamental right of its twenty-three million people to participate in the work and activities of the United Nations is fully respected". Pursuant to rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, we attach an explanatory memorandum (see annex I) and a draft resolution (see annex II).

*(Signed)* **Stuart W. Leslie**  
Permanent Representative of Belize to the United Nations

*(Signed)* **Michel Kafando**  
Permanent Representative of Burkina Faso to the United Nations

*(Signed)* **Koumtog Laotegguelndji**  
Permanent Representative of Chad to the United Nations

*(Signed)* **Simon Paul Richards**  
Permanent Representative of Dominica to the United Nations



*(Signed)* Jose Roberto **Andino Salazar**  
Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations

*(Signed)* Baboucarr-Blaise Ismaila **Jagne**  
Permanent Representative of the Gambia to the United Nations

*(Signed)* Eduardo J. **Sevilla Somoza**  
Permanent Representative of Nicaragua to the United Nations

*(Signed)* Rhinehart **Silas**  
Chargé d'affaires a.i.  
Embassy of Palau to the United States of America

*(Signed)* Ibra Deguène **Ka**  
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations

*(Signed)* Enele S. **Sopoaga**  
Permanent Representative of Tuvalu to the United Nations

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**Annex I to the letter dated 8 August 2001 from the representatives of Belize, Burkina Faso, Chad, Dominica, El Salvador, the Gambia, Nicaragua, Palau, Senegal and Tuvalu to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

**Explanatory memorandum**

The Republic of China on Taiwan is the only aspiring country that remains excluded from the United Nations after the admission of Tuvalu to the United Nations in 2000. Today, for the following reasons, there is an urgent need to examine this situation and to redress this mistaken omission.

- 1. The Republic of China is a democratic country and its democratically elected government is the sole legitimate one that can actually represent the interests and wishes of the people of Taiwan in the United Nations.**

The Republic of China and the People's Republic of China have coexisted on their respective sides of the Taiwan Strait, with neither subject to the other's rule for decades. Over that past half-century, each side has developed its own political system, social values and foreign relations. Therefore, each of these two sides can speak for and represent only the people actually under its jurisdiction on its respective side of the Taiwan Strait. Contrary to some claims, the People's Republic of China has never exercised any control over Taiwan since 1949.

- 2. The exclusion of the Republic of China from the United Nations and its related agencies has created a major and serious obstacle for both the Government and the people of the Republic of China in their pursuit of their fundamental right to participate in international organizations and activities.**

From 1950 to 1971, the United Nations considered the question of China's representation. In October 1971, at its twenty-sixth session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 2758 (XXVI), in which it was decided that the China seat would be taken by the People's Republic of China. That resolution, however, failed to address the issue of legitimate representation for the people of Taiwan in the United Nations.

Worse still, the above-mentioned resolution has often been invoked to deter the participation of individuals and non-governmental groups of Taiwan in United Nations activities and all activities related to the functions of the Economic and Social Council. This unjust exclusion of the Republic of China's civil associations and individuals runs counter to the predominant trend of involving all possible participants in international affairs.

The principle of universality, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, demonstrates that the United Nations is open to all States regardless of their size and population; all are welcome to participate and their rights must be guaranteed. In recent years, the United Nations has expanded its functions to include the respect for human rights, advocacy of freedom, realization of democracy, cooperation on economic and social development, humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping operations. However, with all the United Nations achievements in realizing the principle of universality, there is still one country left uncovered by this principle.

The involuntary absence of the Republic of China in United Nations activities poses an irony to the United Nations principle of universality.

**3. The Republic of China, a country with significant achievements, is a constructive and responsible member of the international community.**

The Republic of China, with a population of 23 million, has played a positive role in entrenching democracy, promoting world trade, eradicating poverty and advancing human rights, a fact that merits recognition by States Members of the United Nations. Above all, it is a peace-loving country, which is able and willing to carry out the obligations contained in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Republic of China held its first direct presidential election in March 1996, the first time in history that the Republic elected its highest leader by popular vote. In March 2000, Mr. Chen Shuibian of the Democratic Progressive Party was elected in the second direct presidential election, marking the first-ever change of political parties for the presidency of the Republic of China.

The Republic of China is one of the most successful examples of economic development in the twenty-first century. It is now the world's seventeenth largest economy in terms of GNP, the fifteenth most important trading country and the sixteenth largest foreign direct investor. It possesses the third largest amount of foreign reserves in the world.

The Republic of China is also a humanitarian-minded country. Over the years it was sent over 10,000 experts to countries in Asia, the South Pacific, Latin America and Africa to help develop their agricultural, fishery and aquacultural industries. Over the past years, it also has provided disaster relief to various countries throughout the world, including the People's Republic of China, and has responded to the United Nations appeals for emergency relief and rehabilitation assistance to countries suffering from natural disasters and the ravages of war.

Taiwan contributes to regional development programmes through international financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank, the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, the Inter-American Development Bank, the African Development Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

Taiwan is fully committed to upholding the international norms of human rights spearheaded by the United Nations. In his inaugural speech in May 2000 and again in his New Year address to the nation in January 2001, President Chen pointed out that the Republic of China would abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. The Ministry of Justice of the Republic of China has introduced a draft version of the basic law on the protection of human rights, which includes sections devoted to the rights of women, children, labourers, the physically and mentally challenged, senior citizens and aborigines.

**4. The United Nations should take note of the recent conciliatory gestures of the Republic of China towards the People's Republic of China, and play a facilitating role by providing a forum for their reconciliation and rapprochement.**

President Chen, in his year-end national address in 2000, appealed to the Government and leaders on the Chinese mainland to overcome the current dispute and deadlock over the Taiwan Strait through tolerance, foresight and wisdom.

On 1 January 2001, the Republic of China implemented “three mini-links” to launch direct trade, postal and shipping links between Taiwan’s two offshore island groups of Kinmen and Matsu and Mainland China’s Xiamen and Fuzhou. Taiwan hopes to foster mutual confidence and gradually build mutual trust between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait through those links.

With a view to promoting exchanges across the Taiwan Strait, Taiwan has granted permission to journalists from Mainland China to be posted for a period of one month in Taiwan so as to facilitate coverage of Taiwan, to Mainland China spouses of Taiwan residents to work in Taiwan, to banks in Taiwan to open representative offices in Mainland China, to high-ranking officials to visit Mainland China, and to an exchange of information on criminal activities between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait.

As an organization dedicated to the preservation and maintenance of international peace and security, the United Nations should facilitate reconciliation and a peace process between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait. The United Nations can serve as a forum to build mutual understanding and goodwill between the Republic of China and the People’s Republic of China.

**5. In the world of increasing globalization, the General Assembly should act to ensure that the voice of the 23 million people on Taiwan is heard in the United Nations and its related organizations.**

Tremendous changes have taken place globally in the past two decades. The world is facing increasingly demanding tasks in eradicating disease and poverty, combating HIV/AIDS, protecting the environment and endangered species, regulating human migration and population growth, and promoting human rights and dignity. Many of those issues call for global and comprehensive efforts that transcend traditional national boundaries. To be more effective and efficient, these joint efforts require not only broader support and cooperation from national Governments, but also greater involvement and participation from civil society actors and individuals. As the world organization with the most comprehensive functions, the States Members of the United Nations should invite all the members of the international community to join in the partnership to further the objectives and purposes of the United Nations.

People around the world are confronting new challenges in the new millennium. Reconciliation has replaced confrontation as the dominant spirit of the twenty-first century and the mainstream value of the international community. It is high time that the United Nations seriously reconsider the abnormal situation of continued exclusion of Taiwan from this most important global forum. With the participation of the Republic of China, the United Nations can live up to its principle of universality, achieve its goal of preventive diplomacy and facilitate the cross-strait reconciliation and peace process.

**Annex II to the letter dated 8 August 2001 from the representatives of Belize, Burkina Faso, Chad, Dominica, El Salvador, the Gambia, Nicaragua, Palau, Senegal and Tuvalu to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

**Draft resolution**

*The General Assembly,*

*Considering*, with concern, the fact that the twenty-three million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan are the only remaining people in the world who still do not have actual and legitimate representation in the United Nations,

*Recognizing* that since 1949 the Government of the Republic of China has exercised effective control and jurisdiction over the Taiwan area while the Government of the People's Republic of China has exercised effective control and jurisdiction over the Chinese mainland during the same time period,

*Acknowledging* that the Republic of China on Taiwan is a constructive and responsible member of the international community, with a democratic system and a strong, vibrant economy,

*Observing* that the strategic location of Taiwan is vital to the peace and security of the East Asian and Pacific regions and that the differences between the two sides of the Taiwan Strait should be resolved peacefully in the interest of international peace and security,

*Mindful* of the fact that the Republic of China has committed itself to peaceful resolution of differences with the People's Republic of China and has repeatedly offered friendly and conciliatory gestures to the leadership of the People's Republic of China,

*Noting* the declaration of the Government of the Republic of China on Taiwan that it accepts without condition the obligations contained in the Charter of the United Nations, that it is able and willing to carry out those obligations and that it is also fully committed to observing the principles and spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,

*Stressing* the significance that recognition of and respect for the fundamental rights of the twenty-three million people of the Republic of China on Taiwan would have for upholding the principles and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations,

*Decides:*

(a) To establish a working group of the General Assembly with the mandate of examining thoroughly the exceptional international situation pertaining to the Republic of China on Taiwan with a view to ensuring that its twenty-three million people participate in the United Nations and its related agencies and thereby contribute actively to the international community;

(b) To invite the representatives of the Republic of China to take part in the work of the working group;

(c) To express its concern about cross-strait tension and its possible impact upon regional peace, stability and prosperity, and to encourage the Republic of

China on Taiwan and the People's Republic of China to resume dialogue and communications on the basis of equal footing and peaceful solution;

(d) To call for a peaceful resolution of differences between the Republic of China and the People's Republic of China, which bears heavily on the peace and security of Asia and the Pacific, and to encourage the international community to pay close attention to the situation in that region.

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